

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING BLAKE VANDEVER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Blake Vandever. Blake is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 81, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Blake has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Blake has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Blake has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Blake Vandever for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

COMMENDING UZBEKISTAN ON 25 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

HON. MADELINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include in the RECORD an opinion piece written by our former colleague, the gentleman from American Samoa, Mr. Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, who was the first Asian-Pacific American in U.S. history to serve as Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment, which had broad jurisdiction for U.S. policy affecting the region, including Central Asia. Mr. Faleomavaega also founded the Congressional Caucus on Central Asia, and his work continues to influence the region today.

2016 marked the 25th anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence from the Soviet Union. For some 15 years, it has been my privilege to work closely with the government of Uzbekistan in various capacities—as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Foreign Affairs; as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment; as Ranking Member; and as founder of the Congressional Caucus on Central Asia.

I am proud of Uzbekistan for the great progress it has made on its march to democracy, and I especially commend Uzbekistan on its recent presidential election as well as Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev on his victory. In an act that demonstrated Uzbekistan's commitment to a transparent process, Uzbekistan invited about 300 international observers, including a full-scale election observation

team from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to monitor the election, which was held on December 4, 2016 upon the passing of the late President Islam Karimov who served as Uzbekistan's president since independence. While every government, including the United States, has room for improvement, I am pleased that Uzbekistan's first election upon the passing of President Karimov was carried out peacefully and in accordance with Uzbekistan's constitution.

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States until now, Uzbekistan and the United States have built a broad-based relationship. During U.S.-led operations in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan provided the use of a military base to serve as a hub for combat and humanitarian missions and, later, permitted the U.S. to move equipment and supplies through Uzbekistan to Afghanistan in support of U.S. troops. In the past 25 years, our relationship has also grown in other ways, including economically, politically, and strategically.

In fact, Uzbekistan and the United States belong to a number of the same international organizations including the United Nations and the OSCE, as well as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Uzbekistan is an observer to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and has attracted investment from Caterpillar, Coca-Cola, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and so on.

From firsthand experience, I know Uzbekistan's accomplishments have been fast-paced, and I have recognized those accomplishments in the Congressional Record for historical purposes. As Uzbekistan continues to excel, I am reminded of these words from the late President Karimov who said that the people of Uzbekistan are “a creative people who deeply realize their identity, take pride of the fact that they live on sacred land and are the descendants of great ancestors, capable to subdue any peaks.”

Uzbekistan is a land more than 2,500 years old. Its history is rich and deep, spanning far beyond its brief encounter with the Soviet Union. Its leaders—then and now—have sought for security and stability at home and abroad. And so, I wish President Mirziyoyev well as he assumes his duties. I have every reason to believe he will succeed for and on behalf of the people of Uzbekistan who have put their hope in him, especially the youth and women, who showed up at the polls to support his candidacy.

I thank my dear friends including Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov who previously served as Uzbekistan's Ambassador to the United States, and Senator Sodiq Safoyev who once served as Foreign Minister as well as former Ambassador to the United States and currently as Chairman of the Foreign Political Affairs Committee of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan. I commend them for their hard work in developing stronger U.S.-Uzbekistan relations, and for dedicating their lives in service to their country.

I also commend Uzbekistan's Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Bakhtiyar Gulyamov, and Uzbekistan's former Ambassador to the United States, H.E. Ilhom Nematov, as well as the many other leaders in Uzbekistan who have contributed to building an independent nation.

I join with the people of Uzbekistan in celebrating 25 years of independence, and it

is my sincere hope that Uzbekistan, like all freedom-loving nations, will hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

EPS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2017

SPEECH OF

HON. BRENDA L. LAWRENCE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 23, 2017

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the EPS Improvement Act of 2017. Michigan is a success story for clean energy job growth. For many years, the press reported on Detroit's urban decline and the lights literally going out. While this may have been true in the past, Detroit has been making a comeback.

After generations of urban flight, the population of Detroit is rising. Along with that growth has come revitalization. All across town, the lights are coming back on. The LED project cost \$185 million and was paid for by the city and the state. The Public Lighting Authority of Detroit, also received support from the Obama Administration with Department of Energy advising local officials on how to brighten up the city.

Investments by the Obama Administration in energy-efficient lighting has reduced costs across the industry, making LEDS feasible for a city like Detroit. Only three years ago, nearly half of the 88,000 streetlights in the city were out of commission.

This major infrastructure project in my city of Detroit, created not only smart urban design to an aging city, but it brought jobs. City officials told me that since 2014, using Federal Department of Transportation funding, Detroit has added buses, hired dozens of drivers and increased ridership by approximately 100,000 a week. Like the streetlights that are now on across the city, buses restore the fabric of the streets and re-establish a semblance of normalcy.

Mr. Speaker, infrastructure projects like the LED project in Detroit and the transportation funding for buses are what we need to get America back to work. These funded projects have a ripple effect on the community and not only rejuvenate it but put people back to work.

I support H.R. 518 and more projects that support clean energy growth.

RECOGNIZING THE 10TH ANNUAL “HEALTH FOR HUMANITY YOGATHON”

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 24, 2017

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh's tenth

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